

# COUNTY OF YORK

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** November 28, 2001 (BOS Mtg. 12/4/01)

**TO:** York County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** James O. McReynolds, County Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Application No. UP-585-01, Williamsburg Motors

### ISSUE

This application requests a Special Use Permit, pursuant to Section 24.1-306 (category 12, number 5) of the Zoning Ordinance to authorize establishment of an automobile sales and service operation on a 6.8-acre portion of a 14.1-acre parcel of land located on East Rochambeau Drive (Route F-137) approximately one-half mile northeast of its intersection with Mooretown Road (Route 603). The property is further identified as Assessor's Parcel No. 2-36C.

### DESCRIPTION

- Property Owner: Francis P. Norsworthy, Jr.
- Location: 701 East Rochambeau Drive approximately one-half mile northeast of the intersection of East Rochambeau Drive (Route F-137) and Mooretown Road (Route 603)
- Area: 6.8-acre portion of a 14.1-acre parcel
- Frontage: Approximately 860 feet on East Rochambeau Drive (Route F-137)
- Utilities: Public water (County well) and sanitary sewer are available
- Topography: Generally flat with moderate slopes to the rear
- 2015 Land Use Map Designation: Economic Opportunity
- Zoning Classification: EO – Economic Opportunity
- Existing Development: Nonconforming (pre-existing) single-family detached home
- Surrounding Development:
  - North: East Rochambeau Drive and Route 199; timeshare resort beyond
  - East: None
  - South: None
  - West: York County well site; future Wal-Mart site and shopping center outparcel

- Proposed Development: Approximately 55,000 square foot one-story building (with small mezzanine) housing automobile sales and service establishment (Ford dealership and Lincoln-Mercury dealership). See attached conceptual development plan dated October 1, 2001 and revised November 16, 2001. (Note: the applicants initially proposed approximately 48,000 square feet of building area; however, as their conceptual plans continue to develop and evolve, they have requested that the use permit authorization reference a potential for 55,000 square feet)

## **CONSIDERATIONS/CONCLUSIONS**

1. Williamsburg Motors is a Ford and Lincoln-Mercury automobile dealership currently located on Second Street in the City of Williamsburg. Established at its current location over forty years ago, the business has outgrown this site and wishes to relocate to a larger site that is closer to the population center of the Williamsburg area and will accommodate current operations while allowing for future growth. The property owner plans to subdivide the subject parcel into four lots. The automobile dealerships and facilities would occupy two of those lots and vehicle parking would extend onto a small portion of a third lot. The total land area occupied by the automobile operations would be about 6.8 acres. The property owner intends to market the remaining 7.3 acres (consisting in concept of two lots) for some other type of commercial development. The property owner does not plan to demolish the existing nonconforming single family residential structure (located in this “future development” area) until it interferes with some future use.
2. The proposed automobile dealership operations will be housed in a building that straddles the property line and in which service functions, various offices and other aspects are shared. However, the showrooms for the two operations (Ford and Lincoln-Mercury), although housed in the single structure, will be separate and distinct facilities, one on each of the two lots.
3. The Comprehensive Plan designates the Lightfoot area of the County as Economic Opportunity; accordingly, the property is zoned EO (Economic Opportunity). In addition, the Economic Development element of the plan designates this as one of the County’s Economic Development Priority Areas. As stated in the Comprehensive Plan, the Economic Opportunity designation “is intended to guide a mix of commercial, tourist-related, and limited industrial uses to certain portions of the County that have or are planned to have the access and infrastructure necessary to support both capital- and labor-intensive uses. The imposition of open space, landscaping, and buffering requirements that exceed the otherwise acceptable levels may be appropriate.” Staff believes that a new car dealership is consistent with this vision and is an appropriate use for this area.
4. The amount of traffic generated by a new car dealership is lower than for many other retail uses that would be permitted as a matter of right. Nevertheless, according to the ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers) Trip Generation manual (6<sup>th</sup> Edition), an automobile dealership of this size will generate more than enough trips per day

(approximately 1,800) to warrant a traffic impact analysis. The applicant has provided actual traffic counts taken at Williamsburg Motors' current location, and they indicate that the dealership does not meet the threshold for a traffic study. Based on the traffic analysis prepared in conjunction with the WalMart project, the additional traffic generated by the proposed Ford dealership can be accommodated on East Rochambeau Drive and the adjacent intersections. Therefore, a full traffic impact analysis will not be necessary at the Special Use Permit application stage since there is available documentation to indicate that the land use itself would not overburden East Rochambeau Drive. However, this will not eliminate the need to prepare a traffic impact analysis as a part of the ultimate site plan submittal if the use permit is approved. The requirements of Section 24.1-251(a) are clear as to the need to use ITE trip generation rates, and the site plan review will necessarily involve determinations about the exact design of entrances and turning lanes.

5. The conceptual plan (revised 11/19/01) for the proposed development indicates a total of four lots, which would be served by three entrances on East Rochambeau Drive. In accordance with the terms of the York County Subdivision Ordinance, each of the driveways would provide joint access to two adjoining lots.
6. The Zoning Ordinance performance standards for motor vehicle-related uses require that garage bay doors be screened from direct view from public streets by a combination of landscaping and earthforms. The conceptual plan for this development does indicate a single bay door parallel to East Rochambeau Drive approximately three hundred feet (300') from the road; however, there would be no direct views of actual automobile service areas, even when the bay doors are open. The building will be laid out such that cars are driven through the bay door into a service lane, and from there they are moved to an internal service bay where the actual work is performed. As a result, the external noise and visual impacts customarily associated with garage bays will not occur in this case, so staff sees no need to require a berm or extra landscaping to screen the bay door from East Rochambeau Drive.
7. The property is located within the Watershed Management and Protection Area overlay district. Accordingly, the developer will be required to submit an impact study addressing measures for controlling stormwater runoff and protecting the Waller Mill Reservoir. Although storage of oil and oil products is not permitted in some areas of the WMP district, this prohibition applies only to areas within 700 feet of a tributary stream or reservoir, which does not appear to include any of the subject parcel. Regardless, the applicant will be required to submit a hazardous materials management and stormwater runoff control plan detailing the methods to be employed to ensure that no hazardous or petroleum-based products are permitted to infiltrate into groundwater or surface water resources. This performance standard, contained in Section 24.1-475(g) of the Zoning Ordinance, applies to all motor vehicle and transportation-related uses.

The applicant plans to construct a retention/detention pond in the southern corner of the property. This pond will be designed to manage stormwater for both the auto dealership and whatever development ultimately occurs on the remaining 7.3 acres.

8. Based on information provided by the Commissioner of the Revenue and the County's Office of Economic Development, the proposed automobile dealership is estimated to generate approximately \$85,000 annually (in 2001 dollars) in tax revenue for the County. The BPOL (Business, Professional, and Occupational License) and real estate taxes account for most of this revenue, with additional revenue through the sales and business personal property taxes. Employment impacts will be positive for the County, bringing 64 new jobs. There will be no net gain in regional employment, at least in the short term, since the jobs are merely being shifted from one locality to another. In the long term, however, the new location will facilitate growth in the business, which could in turn lead to the creation of new jobs. In general, automobile sales and service jobs are relatively high-wage jobs compared with other types of retail development. The average weekly wage in Hampton Roads is \$301 for retail jobs but \$586 for automobile dealerships and service stations and \$486 for auto repair services.<sup>1</sup>
9. Because the applicant's revised conceptual plan depicts the creation of separate lots to accommodate the distinct Ford and Lincoln-Mercury operations, the applicant's original request for additional sign area consideration has been withdrawn. Instead, pursuant to the terms of the Zoning Ordinance, which allow one free-standing sign per parcel, the applicant will be entitled to erect separate signs referring to the dealership on each of the lots (Ford on one lot, Lincoln-Mercury on the other). Pursuant to the terms of the EO sign regulations, these signs may be a maximum of 15 feet in height and 50 square feet in area.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning Commission considered this application at its November 14, 2001 meeting and, subsequent to conducting a public hearing at which no speakers in opposition, voted 4:1 to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit for the automobile dealership operation, but denial of the request relating the signage (which, as explained above, is no longer a part of the applicant's request).

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The County has made significant investments in utilities and transportation improvements in the Lightfoot area to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to attract the right mix of retail, office, light industrial, and tourist-oriented development to the Route 199 and Mooretown Road corridors. So far these efforts have borne fruit with the recent or planned construction of Lowe's and Wal-Mart on East Rochambeau Drive, the Days Inn and Lightfoot Plantation timeshare resort on Lightfoot Road, and the Ferguson Enterprises

---

<sup>1</sup> Virginia Employment Commission, Covered Employment and Wages in Virginia by 2-Digit SIC Industry for Quarter Ending December 31, 2000

sales center and showroom on Mooretown Road. In addition, Williamsburg Community Hospital recently announced plans to relocate to an 83-acre site on Mooretown Road and will likely attract medical offices and ancillary facilities to this area. The proposed automobile dealership operations will complement this development and expand the range of retail opportunities in this area and in the County as a whole. It will also expand the County's tax base and broaden the employment base.

Based on the considerations and conclusions as noted, I recommend that the application be approved by the Board of Supervisors through the adoption of proposed Resolution R01-214.

Carter/3337:jmc

Attachments

- Excerpts, Planning Commission minutes, November 14, 2001
- Zoning Map
- Conceptual Plan dated 10/1/01, revised 11/19/01
- Building Elevations
- Architectural Rendering
- Proposed Resolution No. R01-214